and nano technology manufacture industries in India, has been announced by the Government *vide* Gazette Notification dated 21st March, 2007. The details of the Scheme are available on the Website of DIT.

• **Special attention and priorities to electronics hardware manufacturing**: As per the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), 2004-2009 (updated as on 11th April, 2008), "Electronics and IT Hardware Manufacturing Industries" has been included as a thrust sector in Chapter-1B relating to "Special Focus Initiatives". The relevant details are available on the website of Department of Commerce/DGFT.

• Skill development: The Task Force recommended that the planning and coordination of the skill development activities be covered under the Planning Commission's National Skill Development Mission. Planning Commission has initiated necessary action in this regard.

Fixed phone lines of MTNL and BSNL

†642.SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR:

SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of fixed line phones of MTNL and BSNL are continuously decreasing in the country whereas the interest of the people in fixed line connections of private player is increasing;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof and State-wise details of fixed line connections disconnected by the people during the last six months;

(c) whether a scheme is being run by Government to promote the interest of people in fixed phone connections of MTNL/BSNL; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, the MTNL landline connection are still in good demand. Number of landline phone connection got disconnected by the subscribers during the last six months (from 1.4.08 to 30.9.08) are 44540 in MTNL Delhi & 57762 in MTNL, Mumbai. At the same time, demand for landline is also there. 60813 numbers of new landline connections (gross) in MTNL Delhi and 68158 numbers of new landline connections (gross) in Mumbai have been added during the period. However, in BSNL additional wireline telephone connections are provided, yet overall there is negative growth due to surrender/ disconnection. The circle wise number of Landline telephones of BSNL surrendered by subscribers during last six months is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

The reasons for surrender of landline phones by the customers are given below:

i. Increased use of Mobile Phones.
ii. Closure of office/company,
iii. Surrendering of 2nd and above Landline telephone taken for internet etc. due to availability of broadband,
iv. Shifting of Landline telephone customer to BSNL/MTNL Mobile.
v. Shifting of Landline telephone customer to private operator.
vi. Economic reasons etc.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. MTNL and BSNL are striving hard to retain its landline connections. MTNL and BSNL are taking following measure for creating interest of the subscribers for taking their landline connection:

Measures taken by MTNL

1. Improving the legacy PSTN Network by change of cables, drop wire etc. as required.
2. All exchanges have been made Digital to improve service quality.
3. Rehabilitation of outdoor n/w is being done on continuous basis to reduce fault rate and MTTR.
4. New RSUs/ DLCs are being provided to reduce faults.
5. MTNL plans to commission Convergent billing & CRM in current year. This system provides one bill for all services to a subscriber. The system will also address customer request of services, tariff, complaint resolution etc.
6. MTNL is providing a lot of Value Added Services for PSTN subscribers like news, songs, astrology, e-ticketing, SMS, Voice SMS, Internet, Broadband, IPTV etc. in line with the emerging trends.
7. New tariff plans both in landline based PCOs are launched to retain PCO holders and attract new PCO franchisees.
8. MTNL is also taking care of its customers by opening Sanchar Haat, customer service centre, appointment of Dealers & Agent & special care of Corporate Customers.
9. MTNL is reviewing its tariff for various products and services so as to make them customer friendly and to suit various segments of the society.
10. MTNL has launched VOIP Services to provide ISD calls at lower tariffs. Nearly 2000 VOIP connections are working each in Delhi and Mumbai in MTNL as on 31.08.08.
11. MTNL has introduced Broadband Services w.e.f. 14.01.05 which has been a great success in the country. 5.97 lacs broadband connections are working as on 31.08.2008.
12. MTNL has launched IPTV Services in both Delhi and Mumbai. It has helped stop the churn of landline subscribers & has provided enhanced video services to the customers.
13. Promotional offers as well as some new plans have been introduced in both Delhi and Mumbai.
14. Popularity of MTNL's Broadband is increasing as internet usage is increasing. IPTV is also a very attractive technology & is expected to be quite popular specially for VOD. Broadband & IPTV on landline is expected to reduce the churn of PSTN.

Measures taken by BSNL

1. BSNL is continuously expanding its Broadband network which works over the landline connection. BSNL has introduced several new Value Added Services like Voice over IP (VOIP), Games on Demand, IP TV, SMS etc. for promoting the land line services.
2. The present telecom tariff for landline customer is highly subsidised/ competitive, below cost and affordable to the customer. BSNL has introduced many alternative tariff plans to meet competition from private service providers. The tariff of land line services are reviewed from time to time.

Statement

Surrender of Landline phone connections of BSNL Circle wise during last six months

Sl.No.	Name of circle	April	May	June	July	August	September
1	Andaman & Nicobar	148	189	135	194	149	103
2	Andhra Pradesh	20,005	21,705	24,107	21,845	19,779	21,314
3	Assam	4,577	4,473	3,724	7,354	7,135	5,791
4	Bihar	4,733	1,309	4,370	6,449	1,172	305
5	Chhattisgarh	2,640	4,257	6,063	5,928	3,551	3,254
6	Gujarat	18,218	16,229	17,655	23,522	15,244	18,578
7	Haryana	7,468	5,718	5,648	2,145	3,953	4,484
8	Himachal Pradesh	3,940	4,310	3,413	3,797	2,707	3,356
9	Jammu & Kashmir	3,957	5,057	5,630	0	0	4,055
10	Jharkhand	3,907	3,628	1,583	6,398	11,672	3,839
11	Karnataka	16,027	16,688	21,025	20,041	16,329	16,790
12	Kerala	12,698	10,731	10,898	10,771	9,965	16,765
13	Madhya Pradesh	9,539	7,904	7,137	4,722	3,418	6,702
14	Maharashtra	20,809	19,925	23,114	24,990	32,799	
15	North East-1	1,090	567	1,197	1,296	1,061	1,015
16	North East-2	71	110	206	314	268	266
17	Orissa	1,646	1,678	1,735	2,339	14,204	1,906
18	Punjab	6,821	6,401	5,698	7,314	6,868	6,495
19	Rajasthan	16,686	7,580	13,859	8,228	12,051	17,116
20	Tamil Nadu	24,545	19,381	22,868	20,931	17,330	18,879
21	Uttranchal	3,052	3,707	2,226	5,715	3,943	5,351
22	Uttar Pradesh East	7,624	7,581	1,847	6,209	6,080	3,487
23	Uttar Pradesh West	3,284	4,001	3,534	3,927	3,020	3,555
24	West Bengal	8,959	18,175	7,764	7,419	11,396	9,216
25	Kolkatta	6,257	6,214	4,889	6,338	4,516	4,120
26	Chennai	6,094	6,227	7,572	9,069	6,484	5,621
	TOTAL :	214,795	203,745	207,897	217,255	215,094	182,363